

United States Senate

July 18, 2019

482

The Honorable Ajit Pai
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street SW
Washington, DC 20554

Re: *Use of Spectrum Bands Above 24 GHz For Mobile Radio Services*, GN Docket
No. 14-177

Dear Chairman Pai:

We write to commend the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) for the successful close of the 24 GHz band auction. This band will play a critical role in U.S. 5G deployments. Enabling next-generation 5G networks is a key national priority and will transform communications networks and the global economy.

The 24 GHz band is key to U.S. 5G leadership and the wireless industry is poised to invest \$275 billion to build out 5G networks in the U.S., creating over 3 million jobs and adding \$500 billion to the economy. The 24 GHz band offers the first greenfield high band spectrum to be auctioned for 5G in the U.S. While the Department of Commerce has recently called the FCC's 24 GHz strategy into question and even demanded the agency stop or stall the auction, impeding access to the band would put America's ability to lead in 5G at risk.

The FCC followed the standard interagency coordination process in developing its rules and first sought comment on making the 24 GHz band available for 5G nearly 5 years ago. As part of its review, the FCC concluded that its rules would protect passive weather sensors from interference. No Federal party—not the Department of Commerce, NOAA, or NASA—raised any objections or concerns in the public docket. Impeding access to this band now will not change the outcome of this review—it will only slow the deployment of next-generation 5G networks. In addition, the FCC has devoted substantial financial and staff resources to conduct the auction, which raised over \$2 billion for the U.S. Treasury.

It is also imperative that the U.S. have a firm strategy for 5G and, more specifically, the 24 GHz band at WRC-19 in October and November of this year. WRC-19 will determine the initial globally harmonized 5G bands, and it is critical that the U.S. protect and promote the spectrum bands available in our nation today. In preparation for the conference (and before the 24 GHz auction started), the Administration—through a multi-agency approach—established our nation's position on 24 GHz interference issues. Backsliding on the U.S. position now could limit the viability of the 24 GHz band for 5G and could bleed over into the other key U.S. 5G spectrum bands.

Thank you for your continued leadership in advancing 5G as a national priority. We urge you to continue the path that was settled several years ago, and look forward to you updating us on your progress in ensuring that the 24 GHz band remains available and optimized for 5G.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "John Kennedy". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

John Kennedy
United States Senator



FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
WASHINGTON

OFFICE OF
THE CHAIRMAN

October 15, 2019

The Honorable John N. Kennedy
United States Senate
416 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Kennedy:

Thank you for your letter commending the Commission for a successful 24 GHz auction. That auction raised \$2,022,676,752 in net proceeds for the U.S. Treasury and made available 700 MHz of spectrum for commercial 5G services and applications across the country. It is an important marker of progress toward our goal of extending American leadership in 5G.

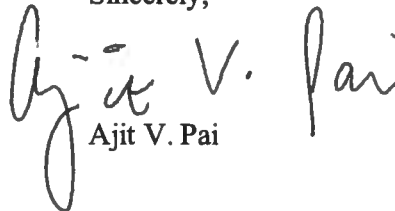
I also appreciate and share your perspective on both the process by which the FCC sought to coordinate among federal agencies in advance of the auction and the need for a unified position on 5G generally and the 24 GHz band specifically at the upcoming World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC-19).

On this front, despite efforts by some to undermine the official position of the U.S. government, I'm pleased to report that at the most recent meeting of the Inter-American Telecommunication Commission (an important meeting that helps form the position of the Americas at the WRC-19), we were successful in advocating for a mandatory limit of -28 dbw/200 MHz. This proposal received support from 17 countries from our region and will be a unified position sent to WRC-19 as an Inter-American proposal.

The Commission looks forward to advancing U.S. positions for the WRC-19 that will advance U.S. leadership in 5G and protect passive weather services in the 24 GHz band. Based on the ongoing work of the Commission's spectrum engineering experts, we do not need to choose between 5G and critical weather forecasting tools. Sound and sober engineering analyses lead us to the firm belief that the U.S. can have both.

I appreciate your interest in this matter. Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Sincerely,


Ajit V. Pai